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EDUCATION WEEK

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N.S.F. Weighing Grants To Assist Systemic Reform

Initiatives Would Aid States, Urban Centers

By Robert Rothman

WASHINGTON—Concerned that its current strategies have failed to promote large-scale, lasting improvements in science and mathematics education, the National Science Foundation is considering a new plan to play a "visible and forceful role" in states' and cities' efforts to achieve systemic school reforms.

The proposal is contained in a draft document submitted to top agency officials last week. If approved, it could take effect as early as this year.

Under the plan, the N.S.F. would provide grants to cities or states that are undertaking comprehensive projects to reform all components of schooling, including curricular content, teacher preparation, school structure and governance, and the allocation of time and resources.

Such funds, agency officials noted last week, could also serve as "risk capital" for other districts considering similar reforms.

"Schools, policymakers, and sources of funding have failed to do the job that needs to be done in science and math," said David W. Hornbeck, the former superintendent of education in Maryland, who serves on the advisory committee for the N.S.F.'s science- and engineering-education directorate. "It is imperative that there be new leadership."

"As the premier agency at the federal level in science and math education," Mr. Hornbeck said, "it is entirely appropriate that the N.S.F. provide leadership in this way."

David H. Florio, a program director and policy analyst in the education directorate, said the initiatives would not replace the

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Reform at 5: The Unfinished Agenda

In Finance Arena, a New Activism Emerges

States Pressed on 'Equity'—Amid Complications

By Nancy Mathis

Submerged by other education issues for nearly a decade, the equity concerns that fomented a revolution in state spending on public schools are resurfacing across the country in litigation and in vigorous debates over school-finance systems in nearly half the states.

The reasons for the activity vary from state to state. But underlying much of it, school-finance experts say, is the sense that the higher standards and expectations for schools generated by this decade's reform movement have intensified fiscal pressures in many districts—typically those with either little property wealth or concentrations of low-achieving pupils, or both.

In the active states, the questions of what constitutes an equitable distribution system for education funds and how to generate the revenue to support it are being raised anew.

Finance experts note, however, that the revival is taking place in a climate vastly different, both politically and financially, from that of the 1970's, when the issue of school finance was the paramount item on education's agenda.

There are new and powerful competitors—both inside and outside the education community—for state aid, they say, at a time when additional revenue is harder to come by. And the reform era has introduced an important complication—"accountability"—into debates

Continued on Page 8

Owen Franken

School in West Virginia, where litigation over inequities continues.

Supreme Court Ruling on Pensions May Cost States Billions of Dollars

By Nancy Mathis

WASHINGTON—A recent U.S. Supreme Court decision requiring states to tax federal and state retirees' pensions equally could potentially drain billions of dollars from the treasuries of 23 states.

Officials in the affected states said the ruling's implications for education are enormous, threatening not only state budgets for public schools but also the benefits of retired teachers and school employees.

"This is one of the most significant rulings by the Supreme Court affecting state finances in recent years," said Gerald H. Miller, executive director of the National Association of State Budget Officers. "It's going to be a difficult issue for a number of states."

In a decision that caught many state officials off guard, the Court on March 28 struck down a Michigan law that exempted state and local employees from paying state income tax on their retirement benefits, while requiring federal workers to pay the tax.

The Court's 8-to-1 decision in *Davis* v. *Michigan Department of Treasury* (Case No. 87-1020), however, left it up to the states with similar laws to decide whether to apply the tax to all state and federal retirees or to exempt all of them from it.

According to a survey by the Federation of Tax Administrators, 19 states—Alabama, Arizona, Georgia, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, New Mexico, New York, North

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Chicago's Principals Fight Loss of Tenure In Reform-Law Suit

By William Snider

Saying they "don't have much to lose," a group of Chicago principals last week filed a lawsuit challenging two key provisions of a new state law giving parents unprecedented power to influence the governance of the city's schools.

The suit seeks to block a provision under which principals would lose their tenure rights and become subject to four-year contracts negotiated by parent-led councils at each school.

It also challenges the process by which a new board of education will be selected under the law, charging that the procedure will give undue influence to parents at the expense of taxpayers citywide.

The suit, filed in Cook County Circuit Court, names state and local officials as defendants and seeks an injunction to block implementation of the entire reform law

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AP/Wide World

RADON ALERT: Indicating heightened concern, E.P.A. chief William K. Reilly last week urged all schools to test for the presence of the radioactive gas. Story on page 20.

Study of Nontraditional Routes to Teaching Finds Ranks Boosted, Questions on Quality

By Lynn Olson

A new breed of postgraduate training programs is helping make a dent in the shortage of mathematics and science teachers by attracting more minorities, recent college graduates, and career switchers to teaching, a national study has found.

But the study by the RAND Corporation cautions that the perceived quality of such programs varies widely, with alternative-certification programs receiving the lowest ratings from participants.

"Programs that severely truncate coursework and place candidates in teaching positions without adequate preparation or supervision are less well-rated by recruits," the authors warn.

"Unfortunately," they add, "these include the alternative-certification programs that, in our sample, trained a sizable number of new entrants to teaching."

According to the study, the nation will need about 20,000 new math and science teachers each year during the next decade. Traditional teacher-training programs, which focus on the undergraduate years, will supply less than half that number by 1992.

The 64 nontraditional programs surveyed by the study enrolled over 2,000 candidates, or about 10 percent of those needed. Thus, they could make a significant contribution to easing the teacher shortage.

These programs include standard graduate-level programs of one or two years' duration; alternative-certification pro-

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Also in the news

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In moderate amounts, work hours do not affect students' test scores, a new study finds.

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Pennsylvania school districts are reeling from the effects of a $48-million shortfall in the area.

20 **On Tuition Tax Credits**
President Bush has assured evangelical Christian leaders that he still favors the idea.

IN SUMMARY

Catholic-School Tuition Changes
The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Baltimore has announced plans to institute a policy of need-based assistance that would require full tuition from families who can afford to pay. **Page 4.**

Business Critiques the Schools
A majority of corporate leaders responding to a recent survey see the public schools as seriously flawed, and report that their companies are hampered by educational problems. **Page 5.**

Redesigning Early Education
Elementary-school principals are working on a "new design" for the schooling of 4- to 8-year olds that will emphasize allowing children to learn at their own pace. **Page 6.**

Home-Education Confrontation
The Iowa House last week passed legislation that members called their final offer in a long debate over home schools and church-affiliated facilities that employ uncertified teachers. **Page 12.**

All-Oklahoma Teachers' Strike?
The Oklahoma Education Association is threatening to stage its first statewide strike next fall if the legislature fails to take substantial steps to increase school funding. **Page 15.**

Gauging Radon's Dangers
The head of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency last week urged schools to act quickly to counter the significant threat to children posed by elevated radon levels in schools. **Page 20.**

Education Prospers in Budget
The Senate Budget Committee last week approved a spending plan for 1990 that would bestow one of its most generous increases on education and related social programs. **Page 20.**

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ACROSS THE NATION

STATES

California Schools Shortchanged On Lottery Prizes, Audit Finds

The California Lottery is shortchanging education by diverting some unclaimed prizes back into jackpots instead of turning them over to the public schools, the state controller has charged.

Controller Gray Davis found in an audit that $5.9 million in unclaimed winnings should have been given to education, as the 1984 lottery law requires.

"What the Lottery did last year was illegal," Mr. Davis said this month at a press conference held with school and union officials. "The law states very clearly that all unclaimed prizes go to education."

The funds were from $5 winning tickets, which normally are redeemed by the retail outlets that sold them.

Lottery officials contend that the law requires only that the schools receive funds from unredeemed winning tickets for larger prizes, which are distributed directly by the lottery commission. They have asked the state attorney general for a ruling to clarify the issue.

The controller's office estimates that public education would lose $18 million this fiscal year and $140 million over the next five years if the practice continues. Mr. Davis has vowed to go to court if necessary to force the commission to turn over the funds.

■ **State aid to West Virginia schools should be allocated according to students' needs, rather than on a straight per-pupil basis,** a task force on rural schools has recommended.

The panel argued in a report last month that the 25 least-populated counties are penalized by the current funding formula, which does not take into account the extra expenses associated with operating a system in a thinly settled area, such as higher transportation costs, as well as rural areas' above-average percentage of students with special needs.

The Special Task Force on Rural School Districts also found that the counties, which enroll 20 percent of the state's students, were the targets of 28 percent of the budget cuts imposed last year.

■ **California mental-health officials are trying to prevent distribution of a controversial state-funded film on teenage suicide.**

Officials had decided against using the $237,000 film in 1986, after medical studies suggested that news reports and movies about suicides might encourage some youths to kill themselves, according to Dean R. Owen, a spokesman for the mental-health department.

Experts who reviewed "Give Yourself a Chance" were particularly concerned about a scene in which a young man tries to hang himself, Mr. Owen said last week.

Department officials now want to acquire the master copy of the film in order to prevent any independent distribution. But the producer, Jerry Naylor, has resisted, arguing that the state's efforts amount to censorship.

■ **The Ohio board of education has voted to create an advisory commission on reform of the mathematics and science curriculum.**

The panel will seek testimony from employers on their needs for a mathematically and scientifically literate work force, and consider ways to hasten the implementation of needed changes in the schools, officials explained last week.

Board members said they were spurred to act by several recent reports that found low levels of science and mathematics proficiency among students.

DISTRICTS

Long Beach Agrees To Cosponsor School After Other Districts Balk

California State University at Dominguez Hills and the Long Beach school district are going ahead with plans to develop a regional mathematics and science high school, after Los Angeles and another local district refused to participate.

The university had asked the Los Angeles school system to cosponsor a bid for $400,000 in state funds for a study to determine whether such a school would be feasible.

But the district backed out of the project after officials from nearby Compton, which houses the university, objected to the proposed school. Compton officials said they feared it would drain away top talent from their district.

Faced with an April 13 deadline to apply for the state grant, university officials contacted Long Beach, the region's second-largest district, which agreed to cosponsor the proposal.

Under the agreement, the school—which could open in the fall of 1990—would be jointly run by the university and the district. The local school system would control the curriculum, according to Yolanda Moses, the university's vice president for academic affairs.

Ms. Moses also denied that the new school would take away any district's "crème de la crème." It would be open to students from any high school in the Los Angeles area, she noted, and probably would draw only two or three students from each school.

■ **The Chicago school system's $145-million plan to repair and renovate 113 schools violates a federal desegregation order,** a Hispanic civil-rights group has charged.

The Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund contends that the school-improvement plan fails to address overcrowded conditions in some of the city's predominantly Hispanic neighborhoods.

The 1980 desegregation decree required officials to ease severe overcrowding in 56 Chicago schools with largely Hispanic populations. Only eight of those schools are targeted in the new plan, according to MALDEF.

But Robert Saigh, a spokesman for the school district, said last week that the group's charges were "totally uninformed."

The plan is the result of a separate court order to bring the city's school buildings into compliance with local fire and building codes, according to Mr. Saigh. School officials have been working to ease overcrowding in other ways, including capping enrollments, adjusting district boundaries, and building new facilities, he said.

■ **The Detroit board of education will again ask voters to approve a $160-million bond issue to eliminate the district's accumulated operating deficit.**

In a special election to be held June 13, voters will also consider a proposed 8-mill increase in property taxes to prevent future deficits.

Voters rejected a similar bond issue and a 6-mill property-tax increase in November, at the same time they ousted three board members in favor of a slate of reform candidates.

The decision by the board this month to seek the levy increase is a reversal of its earlier stance. City teachers, who have been working without a contract since September, have told the board they would not exercise their right to binding arbitration if the board sought the revenue increase.

Board members are hoping that the change in the panel's composition will help convince voters to support the bond issue and new levy request.

■ **Public anger over plans to pay the superintendent of the Raleigh County, W.Va., school system a salary of up to $100,000 has forced the candidate for**

School District of Philadelphia

MOBILIZING AGAINST DRUGS—The Philadelphia school system last week focused its annual "instructional review" day on anti-drug initiatives. Parents, educators, and other citizens met at some 200 schools across the city to discuss current substance-abuse curricula and consider joint efforts to combat the problem.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

The following are summaries of final action by legislatures on education-related matters.

MARYLAND

Governor:
William Donald Schaefer (D)
FY 1990 state budget:
$10.9 billion
FY 1990 K-12 budget:
$1.67 billion
FY 1989 K-12 budget:
$1.56 billion
Percent change K-12 budget:
+7 percent

Highlights

- Passed legislation backed by governor increasing membership of state board of education from 9 to 11, shortening members' terms of office.

Gov. William Donald Schaefer

- Earmarked $93 million for school construction and renovation projects, $33 million above amount sought by governor; $5.5 million for programs for at-risk children; $500,000 for summer institutes for math and science teachers.
- Killed in committee a bill that would have established a professional-standards board for teachers.
- Defeated bills to: require high-school students to maintain a C average to remain eligible for sports; create $200,00 pilot program to increase parental involvement in schools.

WEST VIRGINIA

Governor:
Gaston Caperton (D)
FY 1990 state budget:
$1.7 billion
FY 1990 K-12 budget:
$924.5 million
FY 1989 K-12 budget:
$781.9 million
Percent change K-12 budget:
+18 percent

Highlights

- Placed constitutional amendment on Sept. 9 ballot to reconstitute state board of education. Would allow governor to appoint board's members, create Cabinet-level post of secretary of education and the arts.

Gov. Gaston Caperton

- Consolidation of 150 state agencies into 7 departments freed funds to provide 5 percent pay raise for school, state employees.
- $142-million increase in state school aid includes $108 million to rescue teacher-pension fund from insolvency. Governor appointed task force to devise long-term solution.
- Appropriated $7 million to place computers in all 1st-grade classrooms for basic-skills instruction.

DATABANK

U.S. Aid for Selected Education Programs

A new report by the Census Bureau provides a state-by-state listing of grants by the U.S. Education Department for fiscal year 1988. Such aid, which went to states and localities, totaled some $9.3 billion for the programs below. Information on purchasing the report, "Federal Expenditures by State for Fiscal Year 1988," is available from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

State and Territory	Office of Elementary and Secondary Education: Compensatory Education for Disadvantaged	Office of Elementary and Secondary Education: School-Improvement Programs	Office of Elementary and Secondary Education: School Assistance in Federally Affected Areas	Office of Elementary and Secondary Education: Indian Education	Educational Research and Improvement for Libraries	Bilingual Education and Minority Language Affairs	Office of Special Ed. and Rehabilitative Services: Rehabilitation Services and Handicapped Research	Office of Special Ed. and Rehabilitative Services: Education for the Handicapped	Office of Vocational and Adult Education
					(in thousands)				
Alabama	$74,756	$5,967	$5,113	$73	$1,630	$1,506	$36,390	$25,720	$35,273
Alaska	13,437	2,120	79,685	1,511	417	780	12,558	1,902	5,894
Arizona	42,099	3,841	62,556	1,870	1,606	4,759	33,722	27,455	8,486
Arkansas	48,283	4,583	3,028	16	1,035	342	33,318	19,523	12,598
California	435,092	27,765	69,869	2,070	7,858	21,463	76,874	94,907	61,517
Colorado	38,521	1,735	14,529	94	1,089	2,335	19,618	18,426	16,210
Connecticut	44,239	5,703	7,611	24	918	1,144	20,522	24,001	20,855
Delaware	13,433	7,180	91	—	549	10	12,863	4,146	6,889
District of Columbia	18,983	4,136	1,215	—	954	1,352	15,029	35,242	10,551
Florida	179,089	4,595	13,740	110	1,502	4,224	32,768	38,461	27,682
Georgia	99,787	8,099	8,391	—	7,763	1,437	35,038	36,527	27,834
Hawaii	11,518	4,179	12,321	—	622	897	14,688	2,768	8,826
Idaho	13,646	2,086	4,994	209	673	320	14,585	5,436	8,613
Illinois[2]	168,709	17,442	12,310	92	7,817	3,009	37,305	58,976	60,485
Indiana	60,287	15,810	2,855	—	2,102	3,257	20,135	47,751	21,676
Iowa	30,698	8,459	1,265	42	1,778	646	18,172	22,759	18,684
Kansas	29,668	2,805	11,919	95	632	94	17,942	17,843	14,398
Kentucky[3]	67,371	2,412	1,483	—	416	191	40,797	26,158	45,944
Louisiana	94,024	2,264	6,435	170	900	1,394	44,555	25,077	15,983
Maine	20,549	6,540	4,031	33	706	612	3,230	7,131	9,574
Maryland	64,170	8,336	10,030	390	3,442	2,587	36,402	30,414	30,599
Massachusetts	99,715	14,875	7,962	43	3,543	2,902	14,700	40,985	37,062
Michigan	155,392	17,153	7,450	1,979	2,732	5,563	30,476	64,170	50,052
Minnesota	45,376	8,456	4,509	1,165	1,449	1,195	25,415	35,915	28,869
Mississippi	69,648	4,431	5,172	—	824	453	40,064	19,290	19,260
Missouri	60,211	2,708	8,617	14	2,059	240	31,440	31,699	29,664
Montana	12,224	4,366	26,076	1,256	650	2,143	13,180	2,700	5,855
Nebraska	18,570	3,984	14,812	113	705	334	14,033	6,312	5,922
Nevada	8,192	852	3,638	197	397	188	12,923	3,425	5,186
New Hampshire	9,386	7,887	2,386	—	441	—	13,169	3,138	6,187
New Jersey	125,453	17,189	15,639	—	3,209	2,413	37,966	56,986	39,988
New Mexico	28,019	2,254	39,800	1,132	590	6,179	13,594	712	13,810
New York	426,730	23,524	14,523	636	4,706	24,138	81,420	68,939	67,155
North Carolina	89,699	2,334	8,621	781	3,130	547	32,518	42,714	41,672
North Dakota	8,927	3,726	13,347	258	57	1,029	12,006	2,517	6,149
Ohio	135,247	10,817	5,488	66	3,410	626	46,774	56,033	64,134
Oklahoma	39,360	4,727	27,199	1,989	722	2,789	38,078	23,678	21,311
Oregon	40,737	6,514	3,109	189	1,036	1,033	16,810	18,753	13,541
Pennsylvania	197,619	20,390	9,296	—	3,131	1,410	50,794	57,061	68,945
Rhode Island	14,483	5,491	257	—	774	1,074	7,791	5,352	5,534
South Carolina	57,566	960	6,049	528	1,076	1,449	34,295	13,067	28,147
South Dakota	10,816	3,174	29,852	—	710	1,409	14,350	3,083	3,766
Tennessee	77,475	8,413	2,832	36	1,043	1,016	15,239	32,397	22,839
Texas	287,619	23,466	31,085	145	3,967	11,733	63,844	73,019	59,956
Utah	13,799	2,727	7,885	18	92	1,264	13,858	11,149	10,014
Vermont	10,526	3,671	148	—	958	702	9,296	4,056	3,892
Virginia	73,442	9,608	30,890	423	1,147	1,653	29,836	34,894	39,089
Washington	56,295	2,498	20,864	16	758	2,136	17,010	24,179	20,130
West Virginia	34,429	6,261	189	—	986	—	11,889	9,509	16,762
Wisconsin	57,068	2,865	5,853	—	3,308	713	34,398	26,544	30,277
Wyoming	5,945	1,701	7,317	—	387	247	12,815	2,387	2,979
American Samoa	1,945	488	—	—	—	—	—	585	927
Guam	2,197	1,030	2,568	—	486	—	12,773	1,275	742
Northern Marianas	1,052	1,468	—	—	39	—	—	390	3,710
Puerto Rico	120,799	5,844	822	—	947	1,078	11,541	2,624	18,816
Virgin Islands	3,960	1,147	—	—	105	81	11,803	1,703	579
Undistributed	27,823	555	—	—	10	213	5,298	—	4
United States total	$4,015,909	$383,514	$683,529	$17,587	$94,173	$130,174	$1,408,844	$1,354,523	$1,261,076

[1] Totals for compensatory-education programs are estimates.
[2] Illinois received an additional $39,000 in grants for other education programs.
[3] Kentucky received an additional $5.25 million in grants for other education programs.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Wisconsin Voters Defeat Property-Tax Change

Wisconsin voters appear to have narrowly defeated a constitutional amendment that would have paved the way for a controversial plan to place drastic limits on property taxes.

Known as the "3 percent solution," the plan would have held property taxes to 3 percent of a family's household income. Businesses, families with incomes higher than $83,000, and nonresidents would not have been affected by the proposal.

The plan's proponents estimated that it would have resulted in a loss of $400 million annually in tax revenue for schools and local governments—an amount that they hoped to replace with state funds.

The plan's enactment hinged on passage April 4 of a referendum to strike the "tax uniformity" clause from the state constitution. The clause requires that all property in the state be taxed at an equal rate.

The ballot question was defeated by a vote of 406,154 to 405,504, according to Representative Joseph Wineke, a Democrat from Verona who developed the plan.

Mr. Wineke said election officials are recounting ballots and that final results of the referendum will be available by May 15.

Iowa Lawmakers Approve Corporal-Punishment Ban

The Iowa legislature has approved a measure to ban corporal punishment in all schools statewide.

Sponsored by Senator Joy Corning, a Cedar Falls Republican, the ban would apply to all public and private elementary and secondary schools. It would allow teachers to use "reasonable and necessary" force only in self-defense, to protect others, or to quell a disturbance.

The measure now goes to Gov. Terry Branstad, who has not publicly indicated whether he will sign it into law.

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Teachers' Union In Los Angeles Poised To Strike

Walkout Set for May 30 If Contract Talks Fail

By Lynn Olson

Teachers in Los Angeles have voted overwhelmingly to strike the nation's second-largest school system at the end of this month if a contract is not reached by May 29.

Nearly 87 percent of the more than 20,000 members of United Teachers of Los Angeles who cast ballots chose to reject the district's latest offer and authorize the May 30th walkout, tallies showed last week.

The vote marks the latest escalation in an increasingly polarized and bitter contract dispute that has been going on for more than a year.

Bargainers on both sides of the table, including the school-board president, Roberta L. Weintraub, now predict that a strike is inevitable.

As tensions continue to mount, many are asking what went wrong in this sprawling urban school district and how they can put the system back on track after what one person describes as a "year on hold."

Citizens throughout Los Angeles are "increasingly concerned over the polarization that has developed between the two sides," said John W. Mack, president of the Los Angeles Urban League.

Both parties "are now engaging in an excessive amount of posturing," he contended, "and as a result, the negotiations process has completely disintegrated."

Although salaries remain a crucial sticking point, money has also become a "symbol" for a much larger set of issues, observ-

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A 'Top-Down' Superintendent

Atlanta's J. Jerome Harris Pushes Leader's Role

By William Snider

ATLANTA—When the board of education here hired J. Jerome Harris last summer to be the city's first new superintendent in 15 years, they recognized they had chosen a strong leader and zealous advocate for children.

But they may not have been fully prepared for how quickly he would move to shake up the system. As several board members and administrators put it, "We may have gotten more than we bargained for."

At a time when many urban districts are turning to a "bottom-up" approach to school reform, Mr. Harris has set out to prove that top-down leadership can spark badly needed improvements in a major city school system.

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Harris visiting a district classroom.

The Toxic Quandary: How To React On 'Every Hazard Known to Man'

By Ellen Flax and Peter Schmidt

NEWS ANALYSIS

For some school officials, the Environmental Protection Agency's recent recommendations that they inspect all buildings for possibly high levels of radon gas and lead in drinking water were eerily reminiscent of the asbestos problem.

As with asbestos, they were told that the two substances were nationally prevalent health hazards and that testing programs for them should be instituted as soon as possible.

But, in a further parallel to the decade-long asbestos dilemma, schools were once again, the officials say, given a new responsibility with neither the resources nor the training to handle it.

"We're being held responsible for every health hazard known to mankind," said Gwendolyn Gregory, the deputy legal counsel for the National School Boards Association.

Although federal law does not now require schools to test for radon or lead, the E.P.A.'s highly publicized recommendations last month have put school officials on the hot seat, many say.

Continued on Page 23

Court Lets Stand Integration Plan For Kansas City

Agrees Only To Review Property-Tax Increase

By Tom Mirga

WASHINGTON—The U.S. Supreme Court last week effectively ensured that a multimillion-dollar school-desegregation effort in Kansas City, Mo., will continue as planned.

Without comment, the Court rejected the state of Missouri's request that it examine whether lower courts overstepped their bounds by ordering a wide range of educational and capital improvements in the school district, including the creation of the nation's most extensive magnet-school program. The state was directed to pay most of the improvements' costs, which are expected to exceed $1 billion by 1999.

The Justices did tentatively agree to review the constitutionality of a court-ordered property-tax increase in Kansas City to fund the city's share of those efforts.

But according to the lawyer for the black schoolchildren who some 12 years ago filed the suit, *Missouri* v. *Jenkins* (Case No. 88-1150), even if the Justices strike down the Kansas City tax increase, the programs will continue because other court orders will force the state to shoulder the entire financial burden for the desegregation effort.

"Either way we win," said the lawyer, Arthur A. Benson 2nd. "We couldn't be more happy."

Michael J. Fields, an assistant state attorney general, reluctantly agreed with Mr. Benson's assessment.

"It's called a double-edged sword," Mr.

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Mother Nature as Teacher's Aide: An Environment for the 'Basics'

By Peter Schmidt

When engineers took steps to control water runoff from the construction site for Sumter High School in Sumter, S.C., what happened downhill was an accident of nature.

Water from a creek began to rise behind a dam they had reinforced, causing a two-acre swamp to double in size and flow into the surrounding woods.

Sumter District 17 then found itself in a quandary that is all too common to growing school systems: Its building needs were having an adverse impact on the environment, and some action had to be taken.

Unlike many other districts, however, Sumter 17 did not simply drain or fill the swamp. Instead, it developed an outdoor learning center—a 40-acre facility that will soon be offered as a national model for how schools can go beyond environmental education, to make the environment itself an integral part of the curriculum.

Teachers use the Sumter High School Environmental Center for instruction in all subjects, not just science. With its landscape poeticized in English classes, measured in mathematics, and dissected in biology, the center has become a living reminder, officials say, that educators can get back to nature without leaving behind instruction in basic skills and subjects.

The developments at Sumter High represent an emerging trend, experts say, as schools look for ways to reconcile their desire to preserve and put nature to greater use with the pressure to focus on core subject matter.

"The real approach with environmental education today is towards the infusion of en-

Continued on Page 8

New Vocational Plan Set for House Vote, With Oversight Curb

By Reagan Walker

WASHINGTON—The House Education and Labor Committee last week gave unanimous approval to legislation making major changes in the way the federal government distributes funds to vocational-education programs.

And in a signal on a longstanding point of friction with the executive branch, the lawmakers included a provision that would rein in the Office of Management and Budget's oversight role in vocational research and evaluation activities.

The new funding method would replace existing set-asides for special populations at the state level with a formula focusing funds on local school districts with high concentrations of disadvantaged and handicapped students. *(See Education W... April 19, 1989.)*

Contin...

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In Palo Alto, Calif., a novel agreement swaps money for space.
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The Cable News Network will offer schools a commercial-free program.
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The President picks a "balanced team" that includes a deaf educator.
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Special Education's 'Mixed Bag'
A new report documents a high rate of productive activity by handicapped youths, but some special educators still see "wasted potential" among graduates of their programs. **Page 6.**

Reorganizing in Birmingham
Cleveland Hammonds Jr., chief of the Birmingham, Ala., schools, has proposed a reorganization plan under which 12 schools would be closed, 6 others consolidated, and the rest restructured. **Page 6.**

S.A.T.: A Male Advantage?
Continuing the long debate over alleged sexual bias in college-entrance tests, a new study argues that questions on the Scholastic Aptitude Test are more likely to favor males than females. **Page 7.**

Philadelphia's $8-Million Boost
The city's school system has received what is thought to be a record grant from The Pew Charitable Trusts to restructure all of the district's neighborhood high schools. **Page 7.**

Exempting Pensions in Virginia
Spurred by a recent U.S. Supreme Court decision, the Virginia legislature last week voted to extend state income-tax exemptions to all retirees with incomes below $16,000 a year. **Page 10.**

Special Session in Washington
The Washington State legislature began a special session last week, after failing to reach agreement on budget issues, including a proposed $360-million Children's Initiative. **Page 10.**

Budget Action Heats Up
The House last week rejected cuts in this year's spending for defense and domestic programs, while the Budget Committee approved spending guidelines for next year that favor education. **Page 14.**

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ACROSS THE NATION

STATES

Minnesota Officials Approve St. Paul-Suburb Desegregation Plan

The Minnesota Department of Education has approved a proposal that could lead to an interdistrict desegregation agreement between St. Paul and neighboring suburban districts.

Ruth Randall, the state commissioner of education, last month accepted an amendment to St. Paul's current desegregation plan that calls for the district to begin negotiations with suburban districts aiming toward metropolitan desegregation.

The amendment also calls for development of a staff-training program to help metropolitan districts prepare to meet the needs of a culturally diverse student population.

The proposed initiative can go forward only if the legislature funds it and suburban districts agree to participate, state and local officials noted.

■ **Seven Mississippi counties next month will hold school-board elections that are expected to result in an increase in black representation,** under an agreement worked out between state officials and the U.S. Justice Department.

The agreement, signed last month, stems from a Justice Department lawsuit charging that school-board districts in 30 of the state's counties were drawn in violation of the Voting Rights Act.

By last year, 22 of the districts challenged in the suit had redrawn their boundaries, and all but one of those had held elections.

The elections permitted by the most recent agreement are scheduled for June 20.

■ **Many smaller Minnesota high schools would be required to offer additional courses in mathematics, foreign languages, and other subjects,** under a rule being considered by the state board of education.

The rule, which the board is expected to vote on in June, is scheduled to go into effect in September 1990. It is aimed at ensuring that all students who graduate from the state's high schools have an opportunity to meet entrance requirements for the University of Minnesota, according to Wayne Erickson, director of curriculum services for the department of education.

"Some small districts offer two years of a foreign language, but to get into the university, they have to have three years," he said. "When students enter the university, they have to take a one-credit foreign-language course for no credit, just to get in. That's unfair."

■ **Children who belong to a religious sect should not be excused from public-school classes on AIDS because the curriculum violates their religious beliefs,** Commissioner of Education Thomas Sobol of New York State has ruled.

Mr. Sobol last month rejected a request by the Plymouth Brethren to exempt their children from state-mandated AIDS classes. The group claimed that such instruction conflicted with their prohibition on sex outside of marriage and belief that children should be taught about sex and morality only by members of their religion.

Plymouth Brethren children will be required to learn about the disease and how it is transmitted, Mr. Sobol decided. But they will be able to opt out of lessons about how to prevent the disease by using condoms or by not sharing intravenous needles.

■ **More needs to be done to head off a potential shortage of school administrators,** a draft report by a Wisconsin task force has recommended.

The task force on leadership, training, and licensure projected that up to 47 percent of superintendents and as many as a third of principals in the state will retire within 10 years.

The panel argued that teachers are reluctant to apply for administrative jobs because of the low salaries in some positions, lack of job security, longer hours, and more stressful work.

Panel members, who will submit their final report to Herbert J. Grover, the state superintendent, favor revisions in the licensing program for administrators, salary incentives for districts that hire women and minorities, and multiyear contracts for entry-level administrators, officials explained last week.

DISTRICTS

'Choice' Plan Adopted in Milwaukee Would Send Some to Private Schools

The Milwaukee school board has approved a limited parental-choice plan, under which about 1,000 public-school students from low-income families would be able to attend private schools at state expense.

Developed as an alternative to a proposal by Gov. Tommy G. Thompson, the district's plan would allow students to attend only those nonsectarian schools in the city with which the school system had contracted for services.

The program, adopted last month, would be financed with state funds already provided to the district for voluntary integration efforts. Private schools would receive 80 percent of the money, with the remaining funds going to the district for administration and transportation.

Douglas Haselow, a lobbyist for the district, said the plan differs from Mr. Thompson's idea because it allows the school system to continue receiving state aid for the students involved. The Governor's plan also would allow students to choose from any private, nonsectarian school in Milwaukee County.

Both proposals are now pending before the legislature.

Community To Have Its Say In Sentencing of School Vandals

The "victims" of a destructive rampage by vandalism in a Minnesota high school—students, educators, parents, and members of the community—have been given a say in the sentencing of those responsible.

State law gives crime victims a chance to influence sentencing decisions. District Judges William F. Thuet and Thomas R. Lacy of Dakota County ruled last month that that category applies to anyone with a connection to Henry Sibley Senior High School in Mendota Heights, which was the target of a March attack that caused an estimated $4.5 million in damages.

Three 18-year-old students have pleaded guilty to charges of criminal destruction of property, burglary, and theft in the incident. The case of a fourth alleged participant, age 17, is currently before a juvenile court.

Because of the large number of victims who might want to testify about the sentencing of the three, the judges have scheduled a public hearing for May 24.

The school was closed for the rest of the year as a result of the vandalism. Repairs are expected to be exceptionally expensive because the students turned on fire hydrants that flooded the school and damaged its asbestos insulation, which must be removed before the building can be reopened.

Schools Chancellor Richard R. Green of New York City visits a Bronx elementary school as part of a citywide "teach in" on the hazards of weapons and drugs. The week-long effort last month included the use of a new study guide developed by the city board of education, entitled "Don't Risk Your Education—No Guns in Schools."

■ **A Tennessee principal has barred a 7th-grade student's science-fair project on abortion because it featured jars containing 10 human fetuses.**

Al Cardiel, principal of Pi Beta Phi Elementary School in Gatlinburg, said the student apparently obtained the jars from her uncle, whom she identified as a pathologist.

The display, which was given a blue ribbon but hastily removed from the annual science fair last month, was "not making a statement either way" on the controversial issue of abortion rights, said Mr. Cardiel. And neither was he by removing it, the principal added.

But, he argued, it was not appropriate for the school's 7th- and 8th-grade students to view the preserved fetuses.

■ **Abandoning its efforts to hire an interim chief, the Detroit school board voted last week to reopen its national search for a superintendent.**

The action marked a major defeat for the faction of the board that had been seeking to persuade John W. Porter, a former state superintendent in Michigan, to assume leadership of the troubled district for the next two years.

A proposed contract with Mr. Porter was defeated after a key board member withheld her vote, citing "severe credibility problems" in the handling of the issue, according to press reports.

■ **Surveillance cameras are being used to monitor an unruly 5th-grade class in Baraboo, Wis.**

The class at the South School had generated an unusual amount of acrimony this year, with the teacher saying the students were being disruptive and parents accusing the teacher of unfairly disciplining their children. Finally, the teachers' union and administrators agreed to install two cameras in the classroom, said David B. Ament, assistant administrator for the district.

The cameras have had a "calming effect," Mr. Ament said last week. The few students who have caused trouble since the cameras were installed—and denied they had done anything wrong—admitted to being disruptive when reminded that their actions had been taped, he noted.

■ **Elementary students in Kenyon County, Ky., who do not attend off-campus Bible classes should be provided with regular instruction while their classmates are away from school,** the American Civil Liberties Union plans to contend in a federal lawsuit.

Under current district policy, students must sit in study hall during the hour a week that others spend in Bible classes.

Suzanne K. Post, director of the Louisville chapter of the A.C.L.U., said last week that the district's rule denies students some of the education to which they are entitled.

But Superintendent John C. Forbeck said state law bars the district from providing the students who remain at school with any instruction that might give them an educational advantage over their classmates.

■ **The Harlan County, Ky., school board has rejected an effort by the United Mine Workers to organize its 450 nonteaching school employees.**

The board feared that unionizing classified employees would lead to strikes and educational disruptions, its chairman, Benny D. Coleman, said last week.

"I just don't see where the United Mine Workers are experts in the education field," Mr. Coleman added. "It would be like our school superintendent and teachers trying to tell them how to run a coal mine."

Eddie Burke, regional director for the union, said the U.M.W.'s deep roots in the county—the site of many bitter and often bloody labor battles over the years—made it a strong candidate to organize the classified employees.

DIMENSIONS

Child-Care Burdens

The amount of money that families devote to child care bears little relation to their income, a new national survey indicates.

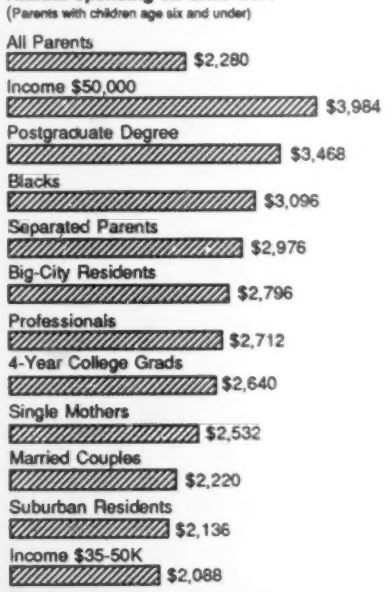
The poll found that groups with relatively low average incomes, such as single parents, tend to spend as much or more on child care as many better-off families—and thus a far greater share of their total income.

The statistics on day-care spending come from a survey of Americans' views on child-care issues conducted by Louis Harris and Associates Inc. for the Philip Morris Companies Inc.

Most parents have to struggle to find high-quality care for their children under age 6, the survey suggests, and favor government action to improve the current system.

While 53 percent of parents say the system works "somewhat" well, only 8 percent say it works very well and 38 percent think it functions poorly.

Annual Spending on Child Care
(Parents with children age six and under)



"These are hardly powerful endorsements for the child-care system," researchers wrote. "Parents appear to be putting up with child-care facilities that are available."

By wide margins, those surveyed expressed support for a variety of methods for expanding public support for child care.

Copies of a booklet outlining the survey's results can be obtained without charge by writing to Family Survey II: Child Care, Philip Morris Companies Inc., 120 Park Ave., New York, N.Y. 10017.

PEOPLE

■ **Bertrand Schwartz**, a French educator who helped establish a national network for training unemployed youths, was named last week by the University of Louisville as the first recipient of the Grawemeyer Award in Education.

The $150,000 award for the international competition is the largest given in education, according to sponsors.

Judges for the award, which is funded by an endowment established by Charles Grawemeyer, a Louisville industrialist, credited Mr. Schwartz with influencing adult education in a world "where lifelong education has become a necessity."

■ Columbia University's Teachers College has established a scholarship fund to honor **Frank W. Cyr**, the "father of the yellow school bus." The scholarships will benefit students interested in rural education.

Mr. Cyr, professor emeritus of rural education at Teachers College, led a 1939 conference that set standards for school transportation, including the yellow color that has become a symbol of American education.

■ In one of his last acts in office, **Mayor Eugene Sawyer** of Chicago presented a report from his national task force on the next generation to Congressional leaders in Washington.

Recommendations in the report, issued last month, include a call for coordinating federal policy on children's issues by establishing a Cabinet-level agency and new committees in the Congress with authority over existing programs for children and youths.

Educators' Oath

Symbolizing their commitment to teaching, juniors at Boston University's school of education last week staged a pinning and oath-taking ceremony for their chosen profession.

The event—similar to one widely observed by nursing students—was the first such public avowal of commitment for future educators, according to organizers.

The student-initiated ceremony was intended to "remind us how important and professional a teaching career is," said Peter Greer, dean of the education school.

The students, who will soon enter the classroom for their senior year of student teaching, recited an oath and were given pins donated by the School of Education Alumni Board.

The oath was written by Stephen Tigner, a professor of philosophy at the University of Toledo.

The ceremony "is an idea we would love to share with all the schools of education," Mr. Greer added.

I dedicate myself to the life of an educator,
to laying the living foundations upon which
successor generations must continue
to build their lives.

I dedicate myself to the advancement of learning,
for I know that without it our successors will lack
both the vision and the power to build well.

I dedicate myself to the cultivation of character,
for I know that humanity cannot flourish without
courage, compassion, honesty, and trust.

I commit myself to the advancement
of my own learning and to the cultivation
of my own character, for I know that
I must bear witness in my own life to the ideals
that I have dedicated myself to promote in others.

In the presence of this gathering,
I bind myself to this oath.
—Boston University Educator's Oath

RESEARCH AND REPORTS

C.D.C. Report Underscores AIDS Threat to Minority Youths

A disproportionate number of the 1,346 children reported as having AIDS are black or Hispanic, according to new federal statistics.

Figures released by the federal Centers for Disease Control last month indicate that 53 percent of all children under age 13 with AIDS are black, while 23 percent are Hispanic.

Among all children with AIDS, 78 percent acquired the infection while in their mother's womb. Another 19 percent contracted it from blood transfusions or blood products used to treat hemophilia, while 4 percent were exposed by unknown means, according to the report.

The means of transmission show sharp differences according to race, the C.D.C. figures reveal. Approximately half of afflicted black and Hispanic children have mothers who are users of intravenous drugs, while roughly 20 percent have mothers who have had sex with drug-using men.

In contrast, only 32 percent of the white children with AIDS have mothers who were either directly or indirectly involved with intravenous drugs, the C.D.C. reported. Half of the white children with the disease had received blood transfusions or blood products.

■ **Policymakers should view child care and early education as "complementary elements of a broad approach to a state's economy,"** the National Conference of State Legislatures argues in a new report.

In "Child Care and Early Childhood Education Policy: A Legislator's Guide," the N.C.S.L. urges lawmakers to work to expand and coordinate early-years services and to reduce their cost for parents.

The guide offers recommendations on how to proceed and describes exemplary policies in Massachusetts and Washington State.

Copies of the report are available for $11.50 each from the Book Order Department, N.C.S.L., 1050 17th St., Suite 2100, Denver, Colo. 80265.

UPDATE

■ **The Chelsea, Mass., board of aldermen voted 8 to 1 last week to approve and send to the legislature a measure permitting Boston University to take over the management of the city's public schools.**

In response to a petition from citizens who say their views on the issue have not been fully aired, however, the board also agreed to hold a public hearing on the proposal and scheduled for this week a vote to reconsider its decision. *(See Education Week, April 5, 1989.)*

Meanwhile, the state board of education, which is concerned that the proposed 10-year agreement lacks safeguards protecting public access to meetings and records, voted 7 to 4 last week to urge the legislature to make the contract effective for only two years.

The state board also voted unanimously to express its "extreme displeasure" that the process of adopting the agreement "deprived poor and Hispanic residents of an opportunity for involvement."

Correction

Due to a printer's error, the photographs of Gov. William Donald Schaefer of Maryland and Gov. Gaston Caperton of West Virginia were switched in last week's issue.